

## Featuring St. Mary School – Marshall, Mich.



The IHM Sisters had a series of starts and stops at St. Mary School in Marshall, Mich.

Four sisters came to staff the school in 1864; it was called "Immaculate Conception" then. The sisters left in 1867; returned in 1869; and left again in 1874. In 1883, five IHMs came back and taught 106 children.

Like the town of Marshall, which is located about 100 miles southwest of Detroit, St. Mary School was small, with fewer than 100 students enrolled in the 12 grades. The parish pastor eliminated grades 11 and 12 in the early 1920s. Nine years later, the ninth and 10<sup>th</sup> grades were also discontinued.

St. Mary pupils were very active in helping to meet the needs of the day.



During World War II, the children "collected nearly seven tons of scrap iron...for Uncle Sam's Victory Drive," according to the convent chronicler. Students also held a bond raffle, Bingo parties, candy sales – and a Halloween party that raised \$45, "with which nine pagan babies were ransomed." During Lent, pupils donated money "to buy food for the starving children of Europe."

By the early 1950s, the needs had shifted slightly. Although students remained active in their efforts to raise money for the Bishop's War Relief, they also raised money for the March of Dimes and contributed toward a new parish school. With 150 students in grades 1-8, additional space was sorely needed.



The building was ready for classes in February 1955. The chronicler reports, "The day of the Big Move, no one is calm."

Over the next 10 years, enrollment averaged just under 200 students. The eighth grade was discontinued at the end of the 1966-67 school year; the seventh in June 1968.

In 1969, our **Featured Class Year**, four IHM Sisters taught 161 students in grades one through six. It was a bit of a challenge for all concerned. "Thanksgiving vacation was royally welcomed," the chronicler notes. The sixth-graders went to a weeklong outdoor learning camp that year, as well as touring Win Schulers Restaurant. At an annual Ping Pong Tournament, doubles teams made up of **David Sayers/Mark**

**Kohler** and **Elizabeth Aarts/Sharon Pierce** brought home trophies. **Julie Bramble** crowned the statue of the Blessed Virgin Mary in May. The sixth grade students "gave Sister Catherine Thomas a summer purse."

The following year, only two IHM Sisters remained teaching. In February 1970, the school board began talking about closing the school, and on June 12, "the doors of St. Mary's were sadly locked about noon."

## In 1969



The Dow Jones Industrial Average closed the year at 800. The average income per year was \$8,550. A new car cost \$3,270 on average. Gas was 35 cents per gallon.



The world watched as Neil Armstrong took his historic steps on the moon.

Golda Meir became the first female prime minister of Israel.

The first automatic teller machine in the United States was installed in Rockville Centre, N.Y.

The New York Jets defeated the heavily favored Baltimore Colts 16-7 in Super Bowl III. The New York Mets won the World Series in five games, defeating the Baltimore Orioles.



More than half a million people gathered in the small, upstate New York town of Bethel (near Woodstock, N.Y.) for four days of rain, drugs and rock 'n' roll.

Performers included Janis Joplin, Jimi Hendrix, The Who, Joan Baez, Crosby, Stills, Nash and Young, Jefferson Airplane and Sly and the Family Stone.

*Marcus Welby* and *Monty Python's Flying Circus* debuted on television.



*The Wild Bunch*, *Easy Rider* and *Anne of the Thousand Days* were playing in theaters. The Academy Award for Best Picture went to *Midnight Cowboy*. John Wayne won for Best Actor in *True Grit*. Paul Newman and Robert Redford starred in *Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid*.

Brett Favre, Renee Zellweger and Jennifer Aniston were born.